

LE GRAND CANON

By ANNE UELAND TAYLOR.

It was Sunday. About half-past four we left to walk a little way along the Seine. A path runs along the very bank, against a hedge of hawthorn. Beyond that the ground rises across fields of young grain to the forest of Sénart. In boats on the river sat patient fishermen, under big colored umbrellas—old men and women, most of them.

We sat on a green bank in the shade of a big poplar. Nothing more peaceful could be imagined than this pastoral place. The experience of the morning seemed a dream. Here was a quiet spot that reminded us of picnics we had had at home. For once we seemed so far away from the war that we talked of fires we had built, camps we had made on little wild rivers in Minnesota and Wisconsin—on the Namekagon, the St. Croix, the Flambeau. The smell of coffee cooked in a little black pail, the smell of bacon broiled on a stick, was almost in our nostrils. We were homesick.

Then we heard the guns. We felt them. It was not like a sound, but like a heavier pulse in our veins, a dull thud of our own blood in our ears. Once, twice, then faster than we could count; then a short pause; then five or six times together. Forty or fifty times a minute.

It was the cannonade of the opening offensive in Picardy, some ninety kilometres, some fifty-five or sixty miles, away. We knew we had come to one of the most awful moments in the war—a moment when all of us in France would tremble, hold our breath, with the great hope of deliverance, the fear of disillusion.

Back in the animated village that dim sound of battle was blotted out by humdrum cheerful daily noises—children being called in to supper, dogs barking, carts rattling over the cobbles.

Every one greeted us with this: "Have you heard about the gun? Le grand canon qui va passer?"

We had just been hearing the guns down by the river, we said. No, no, not that! The great French gun that was going to pass through the village on a train at half-past eight—it would be something to see, that gun! A 320 cannon, going to the front.

Well, we had seen guns, big ones, too. But we might go down if we had nothing else to do. We were rather bored with all this to-do about a gun.

We dined late, in the bosquet at the inn. When we had finished salad and were discussing cheese came Thérèse, daughter of the innkeeper, to tell us that it was now time to go to see the gun. We had but three minutes. We could have our cheese and coffee afterward. It was clear that she did not mean to miss it. There was nothing for it but to leave our bosquet.

Down the one road of Ris Orangis streamed the whole village, children and women and old men, nurses from the hospital, the mayor, old crones hobbling on sticks, excited dogs. At the little gates along the track next the station, already closed, was gathered a crowd that waved and shouted at us to hurry. Three shrill whistles announced the train—we were in the nick of time.

It passed very slowly, dragging a weight that would have sundered those slim lines of track at any speed.

Five cars, crammed with soldiers who hung out of the windows laughing and shouting, with flowers in their hats. Every window was festooned with poppies, cornflowers, daisies. It went so slowly that the chef de gare had time to pass into the hands of one bronzed fellow an immense bouquet of roses, the offering of the village to the crew of the big gun.

Five cars, decorated as for a carnival. Then two long flat cars bearing the Great 320. Long, slender, graceful—gigantic! A sigh went up from the crowd. Painted horizon blue, and covered with roses and lilies, it was a blue dragon, chained with flowers. Across her flank, her name: "La Moqueuse."

Was ever anything so French? And that very day the French fantassins, at the moment of leaping from their trenches against the village of Dompierre, at the south of the Somme, were putting flowers in their coats that they cried should wilt in the German lines, were giving each other, officers and men, a last fraternal embrace before marching to death.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY—By Rea Irvin



NOAH WEBSTER COMPOSES THE DICTIONARY, AUGUST 6, 1825.

ARE WOMEN PEOPLE?

By Alice Duer Miller

SOME people have suggested that women ought to be excluded from the galleries of national political conventions. Their presence, it is felt, occasions too much oratory on the part of men.

One hundred years ago, for the same reason, it was suggested that women be excluded from the Supreme Court.

"Curiosity led me against my judgment to join the female crowd who throng the court room. A place in which I think women have no business. The effect of female admiration and attention has been obvious, but it is a doubt to me whether it has been beneficial; indeed, I believe otherwise. A member told me he doubted not there had been much more speaking on this account, and another gentleman told me that one day Mr. Pinckney had finished his argument and was just about seating himself when Mrs. Madison and a train of ladies entered; he recommenced, went over the same ground, using fewer arguments, but scattering more flowers."—Forty Years of Washington Society, by M. B. Smith.

The moral seems to be that it is always easier to exclude women than to reform men.

A POSSIBLE SOLUTION.

Ladies, who of course admire
(And inspire
Now and then.)

Flowery phrases, words of fire,
On the lips of public men,
Never feel the least compunction
For an unctious
Insincere;
Admiration is your function,
Blandishment your highest sphere.
Praise us always to our faces,
But in cases,
I implore,
Praise us less in public places,
And at home a little more.
FIRST PRINCIPLES.
"The right to vote is the only essen-

The Decline and Fall of Toasting

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the law of compensation, rank very high in the scale of originality and cleverness. To force such a man to prelude his nip with an original and clever contribution to current poetry would be to defeat the very purpose for which he wants to drink.

Suppose that such a law were in force. In place of the present day monosyllabic "Well, here's how," or "Over the river," or "Going South," with which the drinker gets up his courage to swallow the stuff, we would have a line of stevedores and business men leaning on the rail

tial right of citizenship. It is the right preservative of all others!"

Stop. What is this? A suffrage speech?

No, this is the beginning of a newspaper article by the Secretary of New York State.

On the subject of women and the ballot?

Oh, no. On the subject of the New York soldiers not being deprived of their votes.

Do they vote where they have the right?

In a certain township in Pennsylvania

only four men voted at the recent primaries, and three of these were members of the election board.

We wonder if the township as a whole voted to protect its women from "the intolerable burden of political duties."

A SONG OF SENATORS.

(Thirty-four United States Senators will be elected this Autumn. All but one had an opportunity to vote on the suffrage bill in 1914.)

Fifteen Senators, fond of leisure,
May not come back at election time.
They voted "no" on the suffrage measure,
And we set their names to a little rhyme:

Oliver, Page, du Pont and Johnson,
Bryan, of Florida; Reed, Martine,
Catron, Lodge, McLean, Lee, Swanson,
Williams, McCumber and Pomerene.

Seven others not quite so surly,
Simply side-stepped the whole concern.

Hitchcock, Lippett, Chilton, Burleigh,
O'Gorman, Culberson and Kern.

None of these come from a suffrage section;

Women voters elected none.
So should we all before election
Remember the names of every one:

Oliver, Page, du Pont and Johnson,
Bryan, of Florida; Reed, Martine,
Catron, Lodge, McLean, Lee, Swanson,
Williams, McCumber and Pomerene.

THE RURAL LIVERYMAN

By A CITY MAN.

CITY Man—Well, the country looks pretty dry. You folks need some rain bad.

Country Liveryman—That's what we do.

City Man—Still, I suppose you get just about the average amount of rain every summer, when you come to figure it up.

Country Liveryman—Yes; I reckon that's so. Giddap!

City Man—I never heard of any farmer going out of business because of dry weather, did you?

Country Liveryman—No; dunno's I ever did.

II.

With Another Passenger.

The Passenger—Well, the country looks pretty dry, I must say. You folks up here need rain pretty bad.

Country Liveryman—That's what we do. Go on, there!

The Passenger—It's mighty strange how some summers you get a perfect deluge of rain and others you can't squeeze enough rain out of the clouds to lay the dust.

Country Liveryman—Yes; that's so. Giddap!

The Passenger—I suppose a prolonged drouth like this will just about ruin a good many farmers around these parts.

Country Liveryman—Shouldn't be surprised if it did.

III.

With a Political Passenger.

Political Passenger—Well, I suppose politics are getting pretty hot around here nowadays, same as everywhere else?

The Liveryman—Yep; that's right. Political Passenger—Gatherings around the village store and the hotel porch every night, I s'pose?

The Liveryman—Sure thing.

Political Passenger—From what I have observed, I should say that the farmer is as keenly alive to the issues of the day as any city man?

The Liveryman—Yes; I reckon he is, now you speak of it.

Political Passenger—He has plenty of time after chores are over to think calmly and intelligently upon the problems that confront us and to get a pretty accurate line upon the solutions.

The Liveryman—That's what he has. Giddap.

IV.

With a Non-Political Passenger.

Non-Political Passenger—Well, I say, it's a mighty restful thing to get up here in the country, where everybody isn't talking politics as if his life depended on it.

The Liveryman—Yes; I s'pose it is. Go on there, Doll!

Non-Political Passenger—There isn't that crazy desire to talk politics to the exclusion of everything else in the rural districts. Here the people have other and saner interests.

The Liveryman—You got it sized up 'bout right, I reckon.

Non-Political Passenger—From what I have noticed in my own experience, and from what I have read, I should venture the guess that the farmer is too busy with the immediate work in hand, with the tilling of the soil and the shipments of its product, to bother very much with politics and idle discussion.

The Liveryman—Yes; I guess that's so.

Non-Political Passenger—After a farmer gets through his chores at night, I imagine he is about ready to go to bed, and to leave the solution of political problems to people who have more time at their disposal than they well know what to do with.

The Liveryman—That's a fact. Surest thing you know. Giddap!